

Coraddi

autumn 1953

AS WE SEE IT

We are falling, it seems, into a habit of writing Features about Features. We hope, at any rate, that they will prove of more value than Anecdotes about Authors.

General Education, if not *the* word of the hour on this campus, is certainly one of them. We would like to see it seriously and intensively here not as some huge all-enveloping formula to let everybody know a little bit about a lot of things—thereby mass-producing in true assembly line fashion dull quantities of good-girl-scouts with lots and lots of merit badges—but as a program which will enable a willing and able student to know as much about as many phases of scholarship as she can intelligently cope with.

It is our belief that the sciences, the humanities, and the arts all have significant and integral relationship to each other. It is also our belief that in the end and after all, the correlation of learning into some sort of dynamic yet unified whole is the most important aspect of education either for the Serious Scholar who plans to do post-graduate study or for the “average” student (whatever that is) whose aspiration toward further education is marriage.

The “well-rounded individual” has become such a watered-down phrase that we won’t even bother to use it. Indeed, it is a matter of great doubt that such spherical products are at all desirable. The important thing is that our educators and our students realize that there is no isolated field of learning and that to truly pursue one “subject” or “major” it is actually necessary to *seriously* pursue all phases of knowledge.

This is a very difficult thing. It is difficult for the educators to instigate and maintain and it is certainly difficult for the student fresh-out of the American High School to deal with. It is quite probable that at least for the first few years such a program would have value only for the “good” student, but it is also devoutly to be hoped that these same “good” students will at least be instrumental as teachers in raising the academic level of the public schools. Thus in a short time the intellectual achievements and capacities of the “average” incoming college student would be greatly enlarged. This, as we see it, is exactly how Teacher Education and General Education are *not* mutually exclusive.

We realize that all this has been said before—loudly and at great length. We are saying it one more time in connection with the feature in this issue entitled “The Creative Process in the Arts” which presents, we hope, a demonstrable idea of the workings of a general education course. It is easy to see how a course of this nature could become a meaningless and shallow hodge-podge for the lazy and the non-studious to use as a culture-capsule. Such a perversion is a danger and such a course is not general education. It isn’t education.

Already on this campus there has arisen much dissention and misunderstanding about general education. Part of this, we feel, stems from the inevitable and age-old human element of bias and error and, allied to this in that it also has to do with inability or unwillingness to communicate, is the element of sincere misunderstanding of principle and ideals involved. These are the reasons that general education is taking such a long time to get here and making so much noise while doing so—but, despite all the hurly-burly, we are confident that neither wind nor snow nor blast of gale shall bar this courier from his appointed rounds, these ivy-covered walls.



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WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro, N. C.

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Priscilla Farah

GOOSEPECKER RIDGE

Steve Bagley worked all the first week in April getting the old farmhouse on Goosepecker Ridge ready to be lived in. Then, Saturday morning when he carried his mother into the kitchen and set her down carefully in the new-painted rocker, he saw her face purse with a timid dismay.

"This is the kitchen?" As she struggled to sit up straight Mrs. Bagley's pale blue eyes skipped from the old-fashioned black woodstove to the metal sink with the green painted iron pump beside it.

"This is it," said Steve. The kitchen had looked fine to him this morning before he had gone down to the village to get his mother. While he had eaten his breakfast the sun shone in thin and yellow and bright through the one window over the sink, and the back door had stood open to the same sun glowing warm over the newly painted brown floor boards. Now it seemed small and dark.

He looked into his mother's face, white and wrinkled into a death mask. Something stirred inside him for a moment, the seed of a vague anger, and he said stiffly, "It's been a lot of work." Then he remembered the house they had left in Haverhill, crowded with dustsheeted furniture, echoing oddly with the voices of people died or gone away, and he reached down a tentative hand and patted her shoulder. "It'll be all right," he said. "There's still a lot left to do. Here, I'll show you the rest of it."

He picked up the frail body and holding it against himself protectively, looked down into the pale, doubtful eyes. "It'll be fine when we get finished. I've seen the man down in the village about planting. We'll have potatoes and beans this year, and truck for canning." She laughed out loud and he grinned down at her. "I guess I can learn how to can, too. Here I've picked up carpentering on pretty short notice, and the rudiments of farming. Canning won't be any problem." He started into the narrow central hall with her in his arms.

"There's a man out on the Belfast Road who said he'd give me some strawberry plants. Name is Higgins, Ans Higgins. He said he'd come over sometime this week and help put up some pea brush. We can have greenpeas by July fourth, Ans says. I got the ground ready . . ." He pushed the parlor door open with his foot.

Mrs. Bagley looked around slowly, taking in the hand made furniture, covered with cushions sewed out of feed sacks, the wood painted a hard, clear blue.

"It's all blue," she said. She thought of the front room in the house in Haverhill. The furniture there had been mahogany veneer, upholstered in a dark rose brocade. There had been little, spindle-legged tables all around the room, with pieces of pale porcelain set on starched doilies. It had always been dark and

cool, although in the last year she had not been able to sit there often.

"Why is it all blue?" she asked when Stephen did not say anything. "Such a cold blue." She looked up into his face, and it seemed to her as though she were seeing it through a smeared window pane. Her eyes were failing, and at times everything looked that way.

His face was blurred, but she recognized the new, impatient set of his jaw and the rigid gaze of his pale blue eyes, like hers, which was directed over her head into the far corner of the room.

She followed his gaze and then said breathlessly, excited, "The organ, Stephen." She wiggled weakly in his arms. "You brought it. Stephen, set me down." He carried her to the place where the organ, small mahogany stained, stood against the wall under the old blue reproduction of someone's painting of Lago Maggiore.

Mrs. Bagley laughed delightedly, a small, breathy, painful laugh, and trailed her fingers over the dark, polished wood of the little organ seat. "The organ, Stephen. You brought me the organ."

Her husband had bought it for her just before he had died. There wasn't much money then, but Stephen had not let them sell the organ. He had quit teaching geometry at the high school in Haverhill where he had been for fifteen years, and had got a job in the blanket factory that had paid better.

With her husband dead, only she and George and Stephen had been left in the old house. George hadn't been working then. He was the youngest, and he never had kept a job more than six months. He'd been a drain on Stephen. Perhaps that was why he had left without even saying goodbye.

Stephen had gone to wake him one morning, and a moment later had come into her room, knotting the tie of his bathrobe, looking like a pale, drawnout edition of George, and as angry as she had ever seen him. But anger wasn't the whole of it; there had been something else in his face, something like an odd satisfaction.

"George is gone," he had said, and laughed angrily. "George has left for parts unknown. Afraid even to say goodbye." And then, as he had seen the shocked white come up over her face and her blue eyes suddenly blink shut with pain, he had come to the side of her bed and knelt there, one arm along her pillow. "I'm sorry, dear. Mother, I'm sorry." He had patted the pillow with a longfingered white hand. Then in a quiet voice he said, "He left us here all by ourselves. Didn't even leave a note. All his things are gone."

She had been expecting it for a long time. George hadn't found another job after he'd been let out at the blanket plant, and he had stayed home, ostensibly to take care of her. He had seen the strain in her eyes when he had come in to her, knowing that

she was dying and knowing that it would not be a sudden thing, but very long. That and Stephen had been too much for him. Stephen had nagged him like an ill-tempered aunt, and George could not take nagging.

That morning as she had lain there in her high, white bed with the pineapple topped posts, her eyes shut against the regular ache which was always a little worse in the morning, thinking about George, Stephen had leaned over the pillow and kissed her, very gently, as if she were a hurt child. She had been surprised. He was an undemonstrative person, used to bottling up his temper, hiding the tight lines of his mouth behind an almost apologetic hand, as if he were about to belch. That was one of the things about Stephen which had amused her. He never kissed her . . .

He said, "Now it'll be all right, mother. We'll be together. I've got you and you have me. I'll take care of you."

And that had been the end of it. He had not spoken of George again, not once during the long months before he decided to sell the Haverhill house and buy a farm. He only listened quietly when she wondered out loud where George was and what he was doing. And here they were on a farm, and Stephen had managed to bring her organ.

"How did you do it, Stephen?" She drummed the arm of her chair with a thin, excited finger. Steve smiled at her.

"Just brought it along," he said. "I had a man come up from Belfast and put it into shape. It didn't cost much." He saw his mother's intense small smile and was glad. She did not smile much, and whenever her face was solemn the small bones protruded and the dark circles under her eyes seemed to eat up the rest of her face. The country would help her, he thought. She could sit in the sun, and sleep at night. There would be none of the car-noises and children-noises as there had been around the house in Haverhill. There, the walls were always breathing sounds, as if they were alive. Even in the remote parlor there was a constant undertone of the breathing of people; the velour drapes seemed to heave gently with it. Stephen and his mother were quiet people.

Mrs. Bagley let her eyes wander over the parlor. "Even with blue, it's lovely, Stephen. We'll have some organ music tonight if I'm up to it. And if I can remember how." She giggled. "I never really knew, did I?"

"Stephen frowned at her, a little disturbed. "Of course you'll be up to it. Here we've got you into the country and you're going to get much better. Right away." He separated "right" and "away" with a distinct little pause.

"Of course." Mrs. Bagley leaned forward with a effort and stroked the polished wood of the organ seat lovingly. "Beautiful, Stephen." She sighed a little to herself remembering the house in Haverhill which was, after all, too large for just the two of them, and much too expensive. She wondered absently why Ste-

phen had decided on a farm. He didn't know anything about farming; but if he wanted one . . . He had collected books and manuals and seed catalogues for months before he had bought the farm, and he'd gone to see the county agent a hundred times at least. He had never talked to her about it, though. It was his business. A pain caught her under her collar bone and Mrs. Bagley leaned back and breathed deeply to ease it.

She knew that she was dying. She had known for a long time. So whatever Stephen wanted to do, she would agree to. She would settle herself to please him. She had never paid much attention to death, and she did not plan to pay much attention until the time came. And then she would be taken care of; she was very sure of that. Dying made very little difference. It seemed to bother Stephen, though. He got angry whenever she said anything about it. But that was easily avoided, because it was not really necessary for her to talk about it. It was a fact; it was there; for the time being it could be comfortably ignored. "Let's see the rest of the house," she said.

He showed her the attic-upstairs and her own bedroom behind the kitchen where it would be warm in the winter. Later they made a small supper in the kitchen with candles because Stephen wanted them, and the good silver and a linen cloth. She put on the pale, rose-satin wrapper that Stephen had given her the Christmas before, and then, as the candles flickered in a draft and the willow tree outside drew whispering fingers over the walls, they ate in warm silence.

"This is very nice," she said finally. "As nice as Haverhill."

He smiled at her. "Better." He swallowed a mouthful of coffee and said, "You look beautiful." She did—young because of her illness, phosphorescent in the yellow candle light. She was still young, he thought. Even at sixty-two, she was younger than he. The was because she had been so taken care of, first by his father, and then by George and himself. Now it was just him.

Stephen set his coffee cup down and brought the percolator from the stove. He glanced up as he finished pouring her cup. "Mother," he said, "What are you going to do at the house by yourself when I'm not here?"

She nodded firmly at him and sipped her coffee. "I shall find something, Stephen. I can knit, and I might make some rugs for these floors if you find rags in those boxes in the attic. I can sit in the sun. There's the radio and books; there's no end of things to do."

"I don't like the idea of leaving you alone in the house."

"We'll arrange something." And the next day Stephen fixed a big bell up just outside the door that she could ring when she needed him.

Within a week or so Stephen and the man from the farm on the Belfast road, Ans Higgins, had the pea brush up and the peas planted, and the rest of the truck crops in the ground. Stephen spent part of one

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The Creative Process In The Arts

For a great many Woman's College students, the college must needs be a vocational school in which the values of a liberal arts education are subordinated to those of the business office, the technical laboratory, the home-and-family, and the public school—the latter being a system in which the vicious circle is continued with a vengeance. Due to the variety of needs and purposes of our large student body, it is difficult and often costly in terms of the student's time and investment to experiment, here in the complex and tightly organized "college proper", with basic courses covering a wide area in the arts and at the same time knitting them together into a comprehensive and meaningful whole. In our present set-up here, with so much technical knowledge required of the departmental major and only so many hours in the day and in the semester, if the core of understanding and appreciation of human accomplishment known as a liberal education is to be acquired, "something has to be left to God" and the student's own talents for synthesis.

Happily for the Woman's College, however, there is an outpost for experimentation in teaching the arts from which we can learn new approaches. It is the Burnsville School of Fine Arts, in operation in the summer under the direction of Gregory D. Ivy, head of the Woman's College Art Department. Devoted exclusively to the teaching of the plastic arts, drama, music, dance, and writing, Burnsville is free from the demands of the other elements of a complete college program, and attracts students willing to spend a summer studying the creative arts; hence fewer complications and a more like-minded student body and faculty. Educationally speaking, exciting things can happen in such an atmosphere of heightened interest in creativity. This summer at Burnsville a course came into being which seems to have come very close to a synthesis of the arts. It was deemed highly successful by both students and faculty, and, according to the director of the school, also succeeded in breaking down departmental barriers formerly existing between the arts, and achieving a wholeness, a unity of study and purpose that was both invigorating and rewarding. Perhaps we can learn much from our trailblazing offshoot school in the hills.

The course, entitled *The Creative Process in the Arts*, had as its objectives "to develop understanding in the student of the creative process as it appears in each of the arts; to make possible comparison between them; to provide discussion of points of agreement

and disagreement among them." It was taught by a panel of five faculty members, representing the five major creative fields (plastic arts, drama, music, dance, and writing) and attended by the entire community of students and faculty despite the fact that only seven students were taking it for credit. The panel method of teaching the course made it possible for the principles that applied to all the arts to be emphasized and correlated, and provided "agreement and disagreement" which was enlightening, to say the least. After the panel disentangled for the day, the course divided itself into student groups going about the rest of the day's work wondering, "Do *you*

think the artist is trying to gain control of the world?" or "Why do people write novels instead of pamphlets or tracts?" or "What is the purpose of art, anyway?" And in this atmosphere of stimulated inquiry, they were likely to find provisional answers to some very basic questions, something that does not happen every day even in an educational environment.

Besides dealing with aesthetic theories, the students were to learn what constitutes the creative process in each of the arts; just what is the approach to his material that each artist has to make? All the students taking the course composed a melody, whether they had had previous musical training or not. They got together and wrote a short story. Students drew and painted who had never engaged in the plastic arts. And almost everyone at Burnsville acted and worked backstage in the dramatic productions given by the Parkway

Playhouse. In this way they had a very rare and valuable experience: active participation in the practical side of each of the arts.

How would a course of this nature be received here at Woman's College? If it was a broadening experience for the creative arts majors at Burnsville, it seems to us that it would be even more worth while as, say the business major's only elective in the arts, or the education major's chance for enrichment of her own knowledge of the art and music and dancing and writing that she will teach later on. If the mountain experiment is any indication, CORADDI could expect some more informed readers and more material, the new Elliott Hall arts program an increasing appreciation of what it plans to accomplish, the Playlikers and dance groups an intelligent audience aware of their problems and yet demanding as tasteful fare as they wish to present. It seems to be well worth adding to the curriculum, if a truly liberal education for every student is our goal.



Phyllis Birkby

POEM

I

Two armies met upon a plain
Honorable armies over a windy plain
 To fight over nothing magnified into a woman.
Two armies met in honorable battle
And the good and gentle friend
Of the single-minded son of Peleus
Died there. Xanthus ran red
And the reeds of Xanthus lay long
In the red flood, unforgiving.
And though Achilles wept
And turned the mild Xanthus raging red
With sweet Dardanian blood,
 One dream was all
All that was given him.

They say the stars sing at night,
A choir of stars, stationary and companionable
 And the Very God, that we
Are of one flesh with Him
And that the sky and land
Are over and under man. The hand of God
 Is over him and the arms curve under.
And they also say the sun rises
And the sun sets.

This is not true.

The heart moves in silence
Through silence
Alone but only sometimes lonely.
The heart creates out of silence
Creatures of silence. The blood has day-dreams
And converses with itself
Silently.

II

He is gone over the long hill
He is gone over the long hill in the morning
Gone away. Weep, for he is gone in the morning
And will not return while the heart
Knows its own silence.

Mountains, press against the earth
close

and Rain, run down to earth
quickly stay close

creep down, Sea

Shadow, lie against the wall

Each thing will possess a thing
And be possessed. Only a thing
Can possess a thing.

run down, Rain, and Sea
creep close to earth

He is gone over the long hill
He is gone over the long hill in the morning
And will not return while the heart
Knows its own silence.

For the heart is only sometimes lonely.
It has its creatures
 and is in its own way wise.
There is no truth in it
But it is wise. And because it is wise
It hears the song of stars
And lies sometime secure
Against God's arm
And sees the circle of the sun.

The wild Achilles was not lonely long.

Virginia Jane Harris

New Home

I used to tease Cackie and tell her the only reason she liked old Geezer was because they had the same birthday. We moved across the street from him when I was twelve and Cackie was eight, and his real name was Mr. Kaiser. Us boys called him Geezer, though, because he was so cranky and always steaming around talking big about what he was going to do. Cackie was a nickname, too, for Catherine. I had started it around the time she was born because I couldn't talk too plain then.

We moved just the day after Cack's birthday. Since everything was packed up, we hadn't had a party, but Mom had made her a chocolate cake with chocolate icing, and I couldn't eat any more or I'd get bumps. Anyway, Cack was still thinking birthday, like she had for five weeks before, and Geezer was there telling us how everything ought to be done. The first thing I knew Cack went up to him and said, "How old are you, Mr. Kaiser?"

I held my breath. You just don't ask old people that, and Mom had gotten onto her before about it.

He frowned at her. "I don't see where it would help you to know, Miss, but I was fifty-five yesterday."

Without a word she went flying into the kitchen and came back with a great big, jagged-looking hunk of cake, and I could tell she had cut it. Handing it to him she giggled.

"This is my birthday cake, and since your birthday is when mine is, it's yours, too. We're twins."

After he had looked at her for a minute, he took it and laughed a little, too. Then he said, "See here, do you like whistles?"

"I like to whistle," Cack said, showing right away that she could.

He laughed again. "Well," he said, "you come over to my house, and I will make you the finest whistle you'll ever see."

She went with him just like that, and I had to stay home and keep on unpacking. When I went out on the porch to start on some of the boxes, a fat lady was coming up the walk in a big hurry. I didn't know her, so I didn't pay any attention. She came on up.

"Little boy," she said. "Little boy! Where is your mother?"

I didn't know where she saw any little boy.

"Mom," I called. "Some woman wants to see you."

Mom came out and said she was sorry for things being in such a mess.

"That's quite all right, my dear. First let me introduce myself. I am Mrs. C. L. B. Jordan from next door."

Mom told her her name and they moved the rug off the glider and sat down. The woman started talking pretty fast.

"I cannot stay but a moment. I really shouldn't sit down. However, I did think it my duty to have this talk with you right at first to avoid unpleasantness later. Although just now you may think me unfair, I am not one to shirk my duty when I see it."

She kept taking big gasping breaths and talking like she had lots of wind. Then her voice got real low and secret, and I tried to stop rattling the boxes so I could hear. She leaned closer to Mom and went on.

"I want to advise you as a friend to have as little as possible to do with Mr. Kaiser. I really think that the man is a little affected in his mind. He lives in that house all alone, which is rather strange in itself, I must say; however, he is the biggest busybody in the world. And his temper! Oh! It's just like I told Lloyd. I said, 'Lloyd, sometime when he gets on those temper tirades, he is going to do real damage. One cannot be nice to him or he becomes a nuisance.'" She stopped and looked at Mom who sort of smiled and said, "Perhaps the poor man is just lonely."

Mrs. Jordan stood up quick. "I fear that he is beyond hope. He makes terrifying threats to people, and he never goes to church. I don't know whatever is going to happen to the man's soul. I am a great church worker myself, president of the ladies' auxiliary, and a firm believer that one should do all one can to lead others to the Lord, but that man is too far gone. He told me that the church was full of hypocrites, and he would have no part of it. I was willing to help him, but he shunned my aid. I felt I did want to warn you."

Mom thanked her, but she wasn't too upset. We had heard this before we moved, or at least we had heard that he was hard to get along with. Anyway, she looked across the street several times, and finally after Mrs. Jordan had gone, she said to me, "Bill, run over and tell Cackie that I want her to come help me arrange her room."

Cackie was sitting on an old homemade table in the backyard, and I told her what Mom wanted. She said she would come in a minute—as soon as the whistle was finished. I thought I had better stay, just in case.

Geezer was whittling on a limb about as big around as a nickel. Without looking up he said, "This hickory will keep a long time, and the whistle will blow after you're gone."

"No," said Cack, "I wouldn't want anybody to blow it when I'm not there."

After he had cut and notched the wood, he slid the bark off in one piece and cut some more. Then he put it back on and handed it to Cack.

"Try it now."

She did, and it was a nice whistle for anybody that wanted a whistle.

That night we had just finished supper when the doorbell rang. Dad went to answer it, and sure enough

it was Geezer. Cack begged to stay up until he left and Mom said all right. We all sat down in the living room, and it looked big and empty without the bird pictures on the wall. Geezer started asking Dad how he was going to heat the house. Right in the middle of what they were saying, Cack interrupted.

"Mr. Kaiser, if you are ever president, Daddy will vote for you, I know."

That couldn't have been wronger because it got him tarted. He jerked around in the chair and sat up on the edge.

"Not me," he said. "You'll never catch me in the White House." He got excited and talked loud. "I've got too much sense. That's the trouble. Nobody with any sense would take the job, and that leaves it for those knotheads that don't know enough to see that they're ruining the country. We'll have another depression before the year is out, mark my words. Somebody ought to take every single one of them out and hang 'em."

I thought to myself that he was crazy, and Cack was sitting straight up on the sofa—her eyes big as fifty cents.

Dad kinda laughed and coughed, mixed. He looked at Mom and then at Geezer. "Well, I think we're almost moved in now. Of course, we still have straightening up to do. You know how it is."

Geezer had leaned back again like he was resting.

"Well," he grunted, "I hope you like the neighborhood. It would be a right nice place if a few folks would see fit to move out. I guess you'll be meeting the C. L. B. Jordans soon. They live next door in the house with the fence around it. Claim to be church-going people then build a fence around their lot and put a lock on the gate. Humph!"

Mom smiled. "Yes, Mrs. Jordan was over this . . ."

He didn't even hear Mom. "Now there's the crankiest two people you'll ever meet. Always finding something wrong with things the way they are. Never satisfied. I'd been living over at my place for fifteen years before they moved here and everything was fine." He was out on the edge of his chair again.

"Hadh't been moved in more than two weeks before Jordan came over calm as you please and asked me if I had ever considered taking milk from a dairy that delivered in the afternoon. I told him I wasn't complaining about my milk. It seems that the old lady couldn't sleep in the mornings because the milk wagon came about six-thirty and woke her up. I told him six-thirty was a respectable hour for anybody to be up and around. He couldn't seem to let well enough alone and tried to get me to take milk from the same place he did. Bragged on the milk and everything. Finally I got sick of it and told him I had better things to do

than argue with him. They got a boy about Bill's age that's a regular scamp."

Mom winked at me and started to say something, but before she could, he was at it again.

"You oughta see that woman when she gets behind the steering wheel. She can't drive worth a hoot. A regular maniac on the road. She used to come tearing up the street about sixty-five miles an hour, and when she got ready to turn in her drive way, she pulled way over in my yard first. I drove some stakes up along the edge and told old Jordan why in no uncertain terms. He made me so mad waving his arms around that I told him to get off my land or I'd jerk off his arm and throw it through him."

Wow! I looked over at Cack to see how she was taking it, and of all crazy things, she had leaned her head against the arm of the sofa and was sound asleep. He left about eleven-thirty. When we were going up to bed and Dad was carrying Cack, I said, "He and Mrs. Jordan feel nearly the same about each other, don't they?"

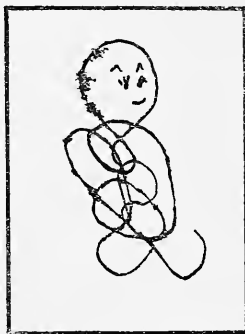
Dad laughed and Mom said, "They are both fine people in their own ways, Bill. You just have to take what they say with a grain of salt."

School started in two weeks. All of us fellows on the block got together and rode our bicycles every morning. We joined the same scout troop, too, and it was the night after our first meeting that we decided to have some fun. Stopping in front of Geezer's house we started pulling up the stakes. When we had them all up, Bud yelled, "He-e-e-y Geezer!" We all died laughing and tore out on our bikes. He came flying to the door calling something to us, but I don't know what.

Mom and Dad would never have known, but the next morning Cack said it wasn't nice what we did. When I told her that sometime we were going to really get him, she cried so loud that Mom and Dad found out. They didn't say much, but I knew they didn't like it. The worst thing about Cack was the way she was always taking up for Geezer when the boys were around. She even told them that he didn't like them either and had told her that they ought to have a good thrashing. I found out then about the first thing he did that made the fellows hate him. Charley Jordan told me

that they used to play baseball over on the vacant lot next to Geezer's house. When he told them to get off, they didn't pay any attention. So one day when somebody knocked a ball over in his yard, he took it and threw it away. He told everybody's dad about it, and the boys had to stop playing over there. Not long after that he planted a garden on that lot.

One thing about it was that he had taken a liking to our family and was always bringing things over



Ellen Farmer

from his garden to show us. Then he would sit down and tell us about what fine quality they were and brag on them. He found out, that Mom and Cack liked sweet potato pudding, and for I don't know how long, he brought that over.

Friday afternoon, sometime later, Bud and Charley were sitting on our porch trying to think of something good to do.

"Say!" Bud got excited all of a sudden. "What do you say we raid Geezer's garden tonight. Boy, won't he howl!"

We got the rest of the gang together, and that night we sneaked out of our bedroom windows and went down to his turnip patch. We pulled them up and threw them all over his front yard.

When Geezer found them Saturday morning, he went all around the neighborhood talking about it. I heard him tell Mom and she said that I had stayed in my room after supper.

He said, "Well, I'm not accusing anybody, but I know who's guilty. You can tell Bill to spread the word around among his friends that the next time I catch one of them on my property, he's going to police court."

I passed the word all right, and, boy, did it make the fellows mad.

Cack was awful excited that night.

"You'll never guess what Mr. Kaiser has, you never will."

Nobody did, so she told us. "He has a mama dog that just came to his house and had three puppies. Two died, but one little one that we named Big is going to stay, and Mama Dog, too. He's going to keep them."

"Oh, gosh!" I groaned. "Does that mean you're gonna have them over here all the time?"

She shook her head. "No, I'm going over there."

Cack was crazy about dogs. At the apartment where we lived before, they didn't allow dogs, and Cack was always feeding stray ones. Then they would hang around barking at the laundry man and paper boy, and finally Mom had to make her stop. Now Charley's dog had taken up with her. That same night I told her, "Well, listen, Cack, you'd better leave Charley's dog alone because he says it's getting so that Shiner stays up here all the time, and Charley doesn't like it."

She didn't say anything, and I knew that she wouldn't leave him alone. It made trouble one afternoon, too. The gang was over here, and Cack was at Geezer's playing with his dogs. Shiner went steaming over, and when Mama Dog ran out and growled at him, he jumped on her. Cack was holding the puppy and jumping up and down screaming, and since Geezer couldn't find a stick, he picked up a shovel and hit Shiner. Then he yelled to Charley, "You'd better call your dog if you want him alive."

"Aw, go soak your head," Charley yelled, but he whistled to Shiner anyway.

Hallowe'en night finally came. We had been plotting and planning about how we could fix Geezer ever since he said that about taking one of us in court,

and we thought that night would never come around. When everybody got together in Bud's front yard, he looked around at us and said, "Listen, gang, I'll go first and get up in the tree. When I wave my arm you all come with the bags, and I'll throw down the persimmons that are ripe enough. From the tree I can be on the lookout for trouble. Then we can sneak up to the house and smear them on the screens."

We felt pretty shaky when we got there, and we stood back of the garage while Bud started up the tree. It was dark as everything. Just as Bud was about to make it, Mama Dog saw him and had a fit. Geezer came tearing out with his gun, and Bud skinned down that tree like lightening. We flew like mad back to our meeting place, and had to make new plans. This time Bud wasn't going to get up in the tree. He was just going to be lookout man, and we were going to gather up the persimmons on the ground.

As we sat there watching Bud creep out, I felt like little prickling needles were sticking me all over. He was right at the tree when all of a sudden from out of nowhere, it seemed like, Geezer jumped out and grabbed him. We were frozen so hard we couldn't breathe. Geezer jerked Bud around and asked him if there were any more besides him. Bud said no, so Geezer marched him home, saying something about going to have a talk with his father. I felt sick on my stomach and had to leave. Most of the fellows did, too.

The next morning Cack woke me up screaming in my face.

"Bill! Bill! Guess what! Mr. Kaiser found Bud and maybe somebody else last night right around his persimmon tree, and he caught Bud and is going to take him to jail."

I got up quick and ran down to the kitchen with Cack right behind me. Mom and Dad were at the table talking about it, and I blurted right in.

"Is it true? Is Geezer really going to take Bud to jail? He can't, can he?"

Mom got out the milk and poured mine and Cack's. Then she looked at me.

"Court, honey, not jail. Come sit down and eat your breakfast. We only know what Mrs. Jordan said, and I don't know how she found out."

I sounded kinda hoarse. "What will it mean?" I kept thinking about Bud having to go to reform school or something and the rest of us just as guilty.

"Oh, Clyde," Mom was pretty upset. "Surely he won't take Bud to court. It was only Hallowe'en night, and it will be so bad to have a court hearing on a young boy's record."

Cack flopped down in her chair. "I think it serves him right," she said. "He is so mean, and Mr. Kaiser didn't ever do anything to him."

She didn't seem to care what happened to Bud, and it made me so mad I was hot all over.

"Might know you'd take up for him. He's crazy, that's what he is, and if he takes Bud to jail, he'll be sorry."

"He is not crazy!" Cack was starting to cry. "He's

nice. He's nicer than you and he's nicer than Bully Bud."

"All right," Dad got up. "Let's wait and see what happens before we start fussing and crying."

Old Geezer did take Bud to court, and the gang decided that if he had to go to training school, we would get together and storm it or get him out some way. The whole neighborhood was talking about it, and Mrs. Jordan spent the whole afternoon running over to tell Mom things she had just heard. She said she had always known that his mind wasn't right and that she couldn't imagine taking a "child" to court. I almost laughed when she said that.

The day of the trial Bud didn't come to school at all, and we waited for him over at Charley's that afternoon. When he came over, first off he started telling us how he answered and talked back to the judge and told him to "go to hell". After he had told us about it again and again, we left. By then I had forgotten how worried I was.

When I got home, Geezer was standing on our porch with a necktie on. I heard him telling Dad he should have done it long ago, and he planned to take us all to court if he had to. I rode my bike into the garage and went in the back door. For a while I couldn't stand the sight of him. He made me sick, but so did Bud. After a week, Bud was still talking about how big he acted in court, and everytime it got bigger. I guess I was tired of the whole thing. Charley was, too.

It took the neighborhood about six months to get over it, and all that time nobody could say a thing against Geezer when Cack was around without her crying and everything. She even talked up to Mrs. Jordan one day and got sent to her room.

Then one afternoon, sometime after it had gotten warm, I got home and found Cack sitting on the front steps. She was bawling. Before I could get off my bike, she was out there to meet me.

"Do you know what happened? Mama Dog got killed." She was crying so hard I could barely understand her. "She got killed and Mr. Kaiser put her in a box and wouldn't let me see. He dug a hole and buried her in the box, and he looked so sad and said he was going to be all by himself except for Big."

I didn't understand, but I looked up and Mom was standing at the door motioning for me to come there. Cack took hold of my hand hard, and I let her for the first time in a long time. She kept on crying, shaking all over. We went inside.

"What happened, Mom? How did she get killed?" I don't know why I cared. The dog had been as mean as Geezer.

"Charley's dog jumped on her, and he was so much bigger, and she was so old that she really didn't have a chance."

"Oh, no!" Cack was screaming. "It wasn't Shiner's fault. He didn't mean to, he was just playing. He didn't do it on purpose."

I didn't know whose side she was on. She was crying

about Mama Dog, then she was feeling sorry for Geezer, and now she was taking up for Shiner. That night she cried to go and stay with Geezer and Big, she cried because she said Shiner felt so bad about it, and then she finally cried herself to sleep.

When Bud and Charley came by to go to school the next morning, they acted mighty smart. First thing Charley said was, "Guess you heard about what my dog did. Mighty smart dog."

"Yes sir," Bud was laughing. "He was getting revenge for me."

Their grinning faces made me sick because I kept seeing Cackie crying 'til she didn't even look like herself. I didn't say anything, but they never noticed.

"Ha. You know what that old devil did? Came storming around to our house last night and told Dad he'd keep Shiner tied up if he was smart 'cause if he came on his lot again, he'd fill him full of shot. Said he'd called the police before, and they hadn't done anything, so he was going to take over. Dad told him he could go if he was through talking."

Bud said, "Huh, your dad should have filled old Geezer full of shot. I'd like to see that."

They both laughed so hard I thought they were going to burst.

"Why don't you lay off," I almost yelled. "You sound like a couple of kids."

Everything seemed so quiet then, and they looked at me kinda funny.

Charley said between his teeth, "Well, grandpa, maybe you're a friend of his."

"Yeah," Bud laughed. "Maybe we should call him little Geezer."

They didn't wait for me to ride home that afternoon, so I rode by myself. As I turned the corner at our street, I saw some people standing up in front of Geezer's yard. Bud came flying down towards me.

"Well, I hope you're satisfied." He sounded like he was growling.

"What're you talking about?"

"Don't tell me you don't know that Geezer shot Charley's dog. He left him lying up there on the edge of his yard so everybody can see. Run up and have a look at what your friend's done."

I pushed around him and went up. Everybody was mumbling and looking and pointing. I rode up to the edge and there I saw him. It was Shiner and I knew it was, yet somehow it didn't look like him. He was so still he looked frozen, half on his back, and half on his side with two of his legs just straight out in mid-air. His mouth was open, and his teeth were bared like he was grinning. There were little brown bloody places on him where the shot had spread out, and then one big place that looked like a rupture. His eyes were shiny and staring out. So the old man had done it.

Charley wasn't around in the bunch and neither was his mother, so I thought I'd ride down to his house. When I turned around, all of a sudden I saw Cack. She was standing in our yard just staring across

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The building had only barred windows and locked doors and wards bare of all furnishings save the necessary beds and chairs and dressers. They were afraid the women might, if given razors, slit their wrists, or, if given ribbons to tie their hair back with, might draw the ribbon too tightly about their necks instead. They were probably right. One did become tired of the green walls, or if the color of the walls did not matter, one might become tired of the sound of keys dangling from the nurses' hands.

She was sitting with her husband in the small visiting room outside the locked door of the ward. Into the hall and down two flights of stairs was another heavy metal door—also locked. This one led to the outside, by the admissions desk and the main lobby.

They sat very close together—she and her young husband. She was a beautiful creature, wearing baggy hospital pajamas and the uniform loose-fitting robe, looking earnestly into his face—almost as earnestly as he looked into hers. His hand played with her dark hair—half unconsciously stroking the aliveness of it—shoulder-length black hair with a luxuriousness that made one think surely the wind also must stroke it often to comb it into such beauty. But the wind did not. Her records in the hospital covered a six-month period—and there were only daily (in fair weather) walks with other patients in the robes recognized all over the hospital grounds—walks timed and directed by ward attendants.

She was asking again, 'Why do I have to stay here? Can't you see I'm all right? How long do you think I can stand this?'

And he was repeating again the story of the night that had frightened him into calling a friend who was a doctor, who had said he was afraid her wild temper would lead to trouble. It was a wild temper—she fought like an animal, crying out that he was trying to smother her—that he had to let her go . . . let her go . . . And he had let her go, knowing that this had happened before, but suddenly afraid that she was afraid of love (he had told this to the doctor, but not to her).

'I love you,' he said now; 'and I want you well.' He leaned forward to kiss her. She turned her head away abruptly.

'Don't, Johnny,' she said, a kind of pain in her voice. Her eyes, the pain in them, too, looked out the window at the small rectangle of sky. 'Look at that, Johnny,' she said. He looked at it—the green-framed sky. 'It doesn't deserve it,' she said.

'What?' he asked.

Her color flared. 'The sky—' she said—'it doesn't deserve to be closed in just because *we* like to look at it.'

He said, 'It's just a window, darling.'

She buried her face in her arms, her knees pulled tight against her body in the leather sofa. Clouds were scudding across the sky. He looked away from them to her.

'Tell me . . .' he said. 'Can't you tell me?'

She raised her head. She wasn't crying. Her eyes were clear—almost defiant. At the point of bursting out 'No, I can't tell you . . . you won't understand' (one could see it in the tautness of her drawn cheeks), she saw the look in his eyes and tense body, and her expression relaxed.

'Johnny,' she said softly, 'there's no one I want to understand it more than you. But how can I tell you? How can I tell you that the sea draws back and returns, draws away again and returns with more rushing beauty than before—again and again always taking much and bringing more back . . . oh my God, Johnny, don't ask if I love you . . .' The head bowed again into the arms clenched about her legs.

He drew her toward him, unmindful now of the people sitting in twos and threes in the smoky room. She raised her head and pressed it close against the corner his neck made with his shoulder. He held her very close. After a while they drew apart, she turned and he held her still only with his arm about her shoulders. They were silent for a time. He took a very long breath. She looked up and, seeing his expression, pulled away and sat up watching him. The old doubt came into her eyes.

'Johnny . . .' she said—a question.

He smiled—not really a forced smile, but one that looked forced, that he could not help.

THE PRISONER

'I just wish it could be this way always,' he said.

'But it can't, Johnny,' she said. 'We'd get tired of it. It would lose its meaning.'

'Why?' he asked. 'Everything is all right when I know you're here, with me. When you're not I feel—well, I guess a little lost.'

She stood up. 'I've got to leave this place,' she said.

He grasped her arm and tried to pull her down on the sofa again. 'You can't leave it . . . you know that,' he said. 'Come here.' But she pulled, tried to get away from him. 'Johnny, leave me alone!' she cried. Her voice was still low, but tight with a kind of fear. He stood up too; he tried to hold her down, gripping her shoulders. She tore away from him, running toward the steps that went down to the outer locked door. He caught her at the top, this time catching her securely and taking her back to the ward door. He had to press her into a corner before he could free one arm to ring the buzzer for an attendant. She was fighting frantically, so that it took all his strength to hold her there

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Evelyn Griffin



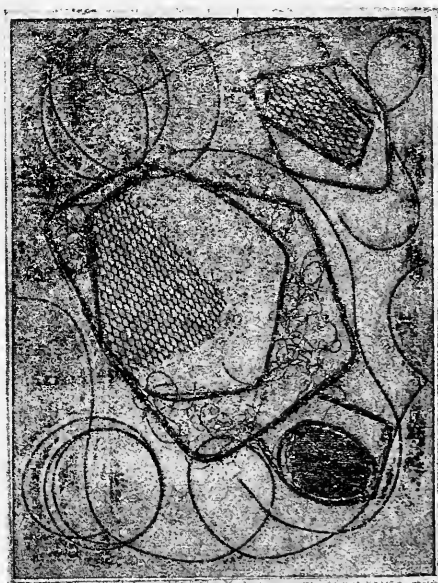
Phyllis Birkby



Lee Hall



Linda Carroll



Eleanor Toy Barksdale

LANDSCAPE OF THE HEART

BY LETTIE ROGERS

Random House, 1953

When a book called *The Snake Pit* was published several years ago, there was a great deal of fanfare, accompanied by raised eyebrows, frowns, and gasps. A motion picture company bought the story and made a movie from it. Why? It was sensational and had "box-office" appeal. For the first time in this decade, a brutal, regrettably accurate account of conditions in many state mental hospitals had appeared in a readable form. There had been articles, probably, about these conditions, in obscure journals, but it took Mary Jane Ward's novel to make the general public conscious of what was going on. There was none of this fanfare when Mrs. Lettie Rogers' book, *Landscape of the Heart*, appeared last spring. Why? Because this book is a hopeful approach to mental sickness, not a sensational "expose." The heroine is on her way to recovery when the book begins, and the mental institution involved in the story is the type to which the medical profession points with pride. Yet this novel has a far more important message about mental illness than novels on the order of *The Snake Pit* ever had.

Landscape of the Heart covers the period of some six or eight weeks from the time that Judith West enters Bryant Hill, exclusive, expensive mental asylum, until the time that she herself declares that she is well. The novel is simply an account of the intense self-searching and self-questioning that lead to Judith's recovery. More complexly, it is a carefully detailed and delicately handled study of a sick mind righting itself with the help of the practitioner who "plays with love" and through the realization of its own capacity to love. Also, the book is a condensed encyclopedia of facts about the important "tools" of treatment for the mentally disturbed, EST (electric shock treatment), and prefrontal lobotomy, the operation that turns a man into a flabby ghost of what he once was.

Judith West, the heroine, is charming, attractive, beautiful, and she has always been. She has passed her thirty-second birthday when the novel opens, which fact proves only that she is old enough to lead her own life as a mature, independent human being and that she is young enough to fall in love. She is lovable and has always been loved—first by her mother and then by boys and men; but she has engaged in a personal quest-for-love that she finds was actually an escape-

from-love. What she must learn to regain her sanity is how to give love as well as receive it.

The novel does not explain *why* we must love and be loved. It does show the steps by which Judith arrives at self-realization and restored mental balance: first, her resentment of psychiatrists, who use love as the surgeon uses the knife: to help open the wound and then induce healing by exposing the source of pain; her gradual acceptance of this therapeutic love; her costly attempt to allay her own guilt and to restore to her sister the love that she had stolen from her; and finally, her acceptance of love and her consciousness of her ability to give herself freely to her sister and to her lover. Involved in Judith's story are four love situations, each distinct, but vitally important. There is the detached, scientific love between Judith and Dr. Evans, her psychiatrist; the strange—yet actual—love between the two sisters, one dominant, domineering, successful, the other dreaming, soft, yielding; the friendship-love-understanding between the two psychiatrists, Dr. Evans, competent and confident, and Dr. Munson, the psychiatrist who needs a psychiatrist; and finally, the man-and-woman, physical-and-spiritual love between Judith and Carl. Mrs. Rogers handles these situations deftly, making the reader acutely aware of each situation individually and of

each in interaction with the others.

In spite of its seriousness, *Landscape of the Heart* is by no means somber. The other patients with whom Judith is in contact are not the "hopeless" cases; these are the people who are well on the road to recovery or have at least a good chance of regaining mental balance. The hospital resembles an expensive resort



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more than it does a mental hospital. The entire picture is one of luxury, the best possible facilities, the best medical care; but under all this is a persistent chorus: even this hospital is not as good as it *should* be; here, too, is the inevitable tragedy and horror—subdued, but ever-present.

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"What is a critic, anyway? So far as I can see, he is an extremely good reader—one who has learned to show others what he saw in what he read. He is always many other things too, but these belong to his accident, not his essence."

In reviewing Randall Jarrell's *Poetry of the Age*, one is tempted to quote far more than the few sentences above which were selected from the chapter entitled "The Age of Criticism." One would, in fact, like to present merely a series of quotations as the fairest and best demonstrations of how well indeed Mr. Jarrell meets his own qualifications for a critic and how successfully his book of criticism fulfills its own terms and stated criteria. This is a book of essays about contemporary poetry which is written *by a good reader*. It is not a book by a critic with a New (or old) Theory of Criticism to expound, to prove which he would slant anything any way it will bend—nor is it a book by an acrobatic scholar. It is a book by a scholar, true; it is also a book by a poet—but these are the delightful "accident," not the essence.

If the book has an "approach" or a "theory" or a "method" it is an appreciative one. By "appreciative," we do not mean wholesale applause or even mere tasteful discrimination (and certainly not "spoon-feeding") but rather an immediate and direct analysis of each poet and poem as it stand, without categorization, "literary" antics, or second and third removes of reference and generalization. The bug-a-bears of obscurantism, modernism, abstraction and all the other small, beating drums of Our Reading Public are silenced because (and, dull though it sounds, this is what delights us most) this is a *sensible* book—one which can say: "If we were in the habit of reading poets their obscurity would not matter; and, once we are out of the habit, their clarity does not help." The entire book is, among other things, an illustration of the truth of this statement.

Written out of "the habit of reading poetry," *Poetry and the Age* bears the mark of the author's amazing and authoritative critical ability which, for example, enables him to take a word, just any word, in a poem and, with wonderful clarity, directly show exactly how this word works in the whole poem and in relation to all the other words in the poem. This examination of poetic language is one of the most illuminating elements in the book. The happy result is equivalent in excitement and in revelation for the student of poetry to a day in the laboratory for the student of science.

A degree of this excitement in Mr. Jarrell's examinations stems from his critical facility and a good deal

book review

POETRY AND THE AGE

BY RANDALL JARRELL

Alfred A. Kropf, 1953

of it stems from the way in which he has reported his discoveries-while-reading. This is one book of criticism which does not sound like the "*Publications of the Modern Language Association*." The style in this case is one of great intellectual wit. The anecdotes (if we may, with any grace at all, use such a word), the illustrations, the points-in-proof are sometimes homerically extended, sometimes surprising, always amusing—one almost says amazing or elaborate or shocking or some such word but somehow this "style" always stops short of *that* and yet makes its points and has its meaning with a vital and sometimes wry clarity. There is here a fine mixture of the satirical and the gentle.

Not at all separate from this element of wit there is exhibited a tremendous erudition. The Woman's College student who reads this book will put it down, breathing wonder, saying "This man *has* read everything in the world *at least twice*." And this learning, this acquaintance with the written word is used here to draw upon for relationships, for continuities, and for meaning, real Meaning, in style and content. This is not a hard, nor a dull, nor a tedious scholarship but a part of a something-more-than clever manner of exposition. The erudition here is not like a heavy layer of castor oil slipped in between orange-juice layers of witticisms but is simply a pleasant thing in itself for a happy use—and a part of the *wit*.

Mr. Jarrell has selected the poetry of Frost, Whitman, Marianne Moore, W. C. Williams, Stevens, and a few others to write about and to show, in their poetry, what things are marvelous, good, bad, terrible and how and why. The regrettable thing is that one must say "a few others" instead of saying "a great many others." It should have been a thicker volume.

B. Mc.

morning putting in the strawberry plants out back of the barn; then he and Ans planted a five acre plot of beans up on the side of Goosepecker Ridge for the canning factory. Green things began coming up through the brown earth, dark with spring rain. The willow in front of the house was a huge, drooping green plume, its light twigs trailing down onto the greening grass.

The first weeks, Stephen spent every day tramping up and down the rows fingering out weeds before they had a chance to grow. Sometimes he simply stood tall above the plowed ground, staring down at the knife blades of the six-inch corn and the round fat first leaves of the bean plants.

One Sunday in June, Stephen came downstairs into the kitchen where Mrs. Bagley was napping on her old, felt-covered couch, with a big, wicker chair in his arms. "Look what was under a pile of boxes," he said. "Dust this off, and we'll have a lawn chair for you." The dust flew in clouds around his head as he vigorously flapped a dust rag along the wicker. "Just the ticket. Sturdy as a mule and considerably more comfortable sitting." Mrs. Bagley shifted a little on the couch, letting one hand trail onto the floor. Nothing stopped the dull hurting sometimes, but moving around made her forget it, and feeling things that were cold, like the floorboards, or hot or rough, helped. She twisted her head back restlessly and glanced over at Stephen. He was busy with the chair, turning it this way and that to get it clean. Lord, she thought, what an old maid he is.

Stephen got the meals and cleaned, and kept everything going outside, though, and she guessed it was all right. If that was what he was, it was all right. It would be nice to sit out under the willow tree. Cool, with a nice breeze coming down the ridge. There must be birds nesting somewhere near the house; she heard them in the evenings. It would be nice to be outside. Steve said something and she pulled her mind back indoors and said, "What, dear?"

Steve looked annoyed. "I said, 'that's about it, how does it look?'"

"Fine, Stephen." There was a short pause. "Do you suppose I could go outside now?"

Steve looked out the one window calculatingly. "No," he said, "I reckon not. It's still kind of cold. Sun hasn't had time to move around the house yet." She listened to him absently, a little disappointed. It was funny how Stephen was picking up the dialect. She supposed working with Ans Higgins was what did it. He was a silent man, but when he did talk he had a brogue like the like of which she had never heard. Stephen picked up the chair and said, "Now, you try this. We got to see if it fits you." He set the chair down beside the couch and lifted her into it. She wiggled a little in protest, and the chair creaked dangerously. "How is it?" he asked.

"Fine." She was a little irritated. It did not help her

to be deposited in chairs quite so roughly as that. "Do be a little careful, Stephen."

Steve looked like a scolded child for a moment, and then his brows drew together. "Sorry." Then with an effort, he cleared his face. "I am sorry." He grinned. "Guess I don't know my own strength." Mrs. Bagley sighed inwardly. That was another thing. Stephen was oppressively aware that working outdoors was making him muscular.

"Take me back to the couch, will you, dear? I'm tired. I'd like to rest a little."

"Didn't you sleep last night?" Steve picked her up carefully and arranged her on the couch.

"Not very well." Mrs. Bagley remembered lying awake and hearing the monotonous ticking clock, and the occasional vague night sounds from outside. She missed the cars going by and the bong of the town clock and the sounds of people passing the house. Even late at night, the old house had been awake, listening, and had kept her company in her wakefulness. Here there was nothing but the everlasting clock, busy, but not alive, and the faint pain which never left her anymore, and the dull thudding of her own heart. "No, I didn't sleep much."

Stephen frowned. "Why, how silly," he said. "There's nothing to keep you awake." He laughed at her like an indulgent father who knows he is being indulgent and commends himself for it. "You'll just have to try," he said. "We can't have sick people on our hands. You're getting better and you will get well. But you have to try."

She close her eyes and clenched her thin fingers into a fist. "Yes, certainly," she said, "Of course. Yes." And it was too much effort to say even that much, and she felt her hand go limp. She thought, Stephen believes what he is saying. With all the rest, he has talked himself into thinking that I am getting well. "Stephen," she said.

"What, mother?" He did not turn from the metal sink where he was stacking the breakfast dishes.

"Stephen, I don't think . . ." She paused and opened her eyes. The sun was shining in the window over the sink and he was outlined against it, dark, tall, heavy, someone she did not know. "Never mind," she said. "Could you leave the dishes until later? I'd like to sleep."

"Of course," he said. Guess there's enough outside to keep me busy. You sleep, now, hear me?" He patted her head and she could smell the faint odor of barns on his hands, a smell that clung to him permanently. "I'll sleep, she said, and knew that she would not. There was no point in telling him; he would neither believe nor quite disbelieve, and it would make him angry. She closed her eyes and heard the click of the outer door as it closed behind him.

The morning passed before her closed eyelids. Slowly the sun that she could only feel trailed down the wall and across the floor and disappeared. The clock

on the stove shelf ticked. The house seemed full of ticking and creaking boards. The backs of her eyelids were yellow and black with sun, and under and over it all was the beating of her own heart. Toward noon, she slept.

Stephen pulled the door to and stopped on the porch for a moment to look at his farm. Two of the Plymouth Rocks had gotten out of the pen and were scratching around, a nice brown red and white against the grass. The barn needed painting, but that could wait until the spring. Maybe if the beans filled out well he could afford it this fall. Ans had gone with him to the village when he signed the contract with the canning factory. The crop would pay well, Ans said. The other chickens were flapping all over the pen and he knew he had better feed them before they started flying. Next time Ans came over Steve would ask him to help clip their wings.



Jackie Goodwin

He started toward the barn. It looks good, he thought. "Real good," he said to himself softly. The barn was quiet inside, not like the house, which was dead and vaguely frightening to him in its stillness, but noisy-quiet. Sparrows chattered in the rafters above the hayloft and the pair of cattle he bought from Ans, one a Jersey for milk and breeding and the other an Angus to slaughter in the fall, were stamping around in their stalls, working on what was left of the feed he'd given them the night before. But not enjoying it, thinking about the grass outside, he thought, mouthing dry hay and thinking about grass. The quiet in the barn was immediate and friendly, unlike any he had known before. He herded the cattle down the little ramp into the pasture and watched them start for a grass patch, their hip bones jolting like the needles in old fashioned sewing machines. He put the gate poles in place and went back to the barn.

The chicken feed was in a wooden bin near the stalls and he filled a gallon can and went outside to the chicken pen. The chickens squawked around him in a flapping cloud. He didn't like chickens much; they reminded him of schoolteaching and children. He shook the feed in big circles around him to get them away from him and went into the hen house with the can. He put eggs into it carefully, his hand clumsy in the warm straw. There were two dozen and one. He'd have to go into town that afternoon and take them to Alger Parmenter, who held them for a man from Belfast. Alger already owed him some ten dollars in trade. There was money coming in already. Not enough to live off yet, but some. Sometimes he felt when he walked through his barn as if he must shout out loud to it. He knew he never would, but the feeling was there. The farm was beginning to make money, and he had done it. He looked up at the barn

towering above him, a scaled monster, flaked white where shingles had fallen, and he suddenly saw it gleaming red from the paint that would go on this autumn, and the house, new-white and low under the willow. He thought of his mother inside, comfortable and asleep. She hadn't said a word lately about the pain; she hadn't slept the night before, but no one recovers altogether, even in a month.

He'd take the chair out for her later in the afternoon. It was getting very warm. He felt sweat pricking out on the back of his neck and he shucked out of his woolen hunting shirt and tied the arms around his waist. He would go check on the north quarter. The beans were the money crop and needed more taking care of than anything else. Getting the hoe from where it leaned against the barn wall he started up to the north quarter.

When he got back, tired, his white t-shirt glued to his back with sweat and his hands dark with lumped soil, his mother was still sleeping. He tiptoed across the kitchen floor and stood watching her for a moment. Then he picked up the wicker chair and, wincing as it creaked, carried it outside. Returning, he started washing up the breakfast dishes quietly in warm water from the tea kettle. In a minute he heard her voice, soft with sleep.

"Stephen, what time is it?"

He glanced at the clock on the stove shelf. "A little after one," he said. "Can't you see the clock?"

"Not very well," she said apologetically.

He wrung out the dishrag and hung it over the back of the stove. "You just got sleep in your eyes," he said. He crossed the room to the couch, his heavy shoes thudding on the wide floor boards. Every time his heel hit the floor she could feel it all through her, like listening to a big drum close. "Please Stephen," she said, "don't walk so heavily."

He crouched down beside her with a look of troubled impatience. "What's the matter," he said. "You need glasses?" He reached over and put the rough browned back of his hand on her forehead. "You all right?"

"Fine. I don't think glasses would be any use . . ." Then she saw the mounting impatience on his face. "Maybe. We could try it."

"We'll go into Belfast next Saturday and check by the doctor's."

"I . . . all right," she said. She closed her eyes and watched the black and yellow circles sweep in and swallow one another and grow again. In the day time it was not so bad. She could watch the circles for a while and then touch something or open her eyes and they would disappear. At night it was terrible. Sometimes she could not feel anything with her fingers because they were numb from lying still so long, and when she opened her eyes in the dark, there was nothing to see but the black swallowing the yellow and the yellow swallowing in turn.

"All right," she said. "We can go to Belfast on Saturday."

That afternoon he took her out onto the lawn and settled her in the shade of the willow. "How's that?" he said.

"Wonderful." She closed her eyes for a moment to feel the breeze playing with the fine hair about the back of her neck. "This is fine. You go and do whatever you have to do."

He smiled down at her. "Here," he said, "None of that." He reached down and patted her shoulder roughly, conscious of the twisting of the bones in his wrist, and the muscle on his arm tightening. "You been sleeping all morning. You just watch how pretty things are around here. Too much sleeping isn't good for you." He sat down heavily on the grass beside her and they looked out together across the road in silence.

Below the dirt road there was a deep hollow. The land shelved down abruptly for a while, so suddenly that the back of the barn was on posts. Across the hollow was a ridge and beyond that another. The afternoon sun was lying warm on the ridges, against the thickets of alder and the mat-growths of ground cedar. The trees were beginning to leaf out, but the young leaves were barely big enough to hide the field—red and yellow with Indian paintbrush—and the small stream that ran shallow and green along the lowest levels of the hollow.

"It's pretty, Stephen."

"Ummm. It is." Stephen rubbed the back of his hand across his mouth. "Mother?"

"Yes, dear?"

"Barn's in awful shape."

"It looks fine to me," she said, a little helplessly. She did not know a great deal about barns. This one was a warm brown with a roof silvered gray with hand-split shingles. It stood shabby but beautiful against the young green of the trees in back of it, and the darker green of the spruce on the near ridge. "It's a pretty color."

"Pretty, yeah, but shingles are coming off by the bushel and it needs paint. It'll be prettier this autumn. I think I can afford to have it painted. And regulation barn paint, that iron stuff Ans told me about, in a nice bright red."

Mrs. Bagley started in her chair and it creaked loudly under her. "Red?"

"Yeah, all barns are red. An old New England custom."

"You're going to paint it red?" The thought of it made her a little ill. "Oh, well." She looked down at him and realized that he expected something more. "Red's rather loud, isn't it? And a whole barn would be a great deal of red."

He frowned. "I like it. The more the better. The important thing is, though, that there'll be the money to do it."

"Oh, yes. That is nice. It's remarkable that you should be able to . . ." She saw him relax. He grinned out across the hollow and she thought, he looks like George. The thin lines across his forehead were gone

and his eyes were opened wide now, light blue. Starting with the new tan. Farming was doing him all kinds of good.

"You look healthier," she said. "You're beginning to look like George."

He glanced up at her impatiently. "I don't look like George," he said shortly. "I'd rather not talk about him if you don't mind." There was a long pause and Mrs. Bagley let her eyes wander down the hollow. Stephen never would talk about George. A few days before he had taken the print of Lago Maggiore down from the wall and put it in the attic. He's said it was out of place in the room, but it as not. It went very nicely with the cold blue of the furniture. He didn't want to be reminded of Haverhill, she thought. "Stephen," she began.

Stephen turned suddenly and put a large, rough hand on her wrist. She shrank in spite of herself. "Look, mother, I'm sorry," he said. He was very much in earnest.

"I didn't mean to be so sudden-like. But I don't think we ought to talk about, well, George, and how he went away. He did go away. Went off and left you, and now there's me and I'm taking care of you. And you're getting well . . ." He smiled at her. "That is, if you put your mind to it. And everything is fine. Let's not talk about George. Or anything old. Everything here is ours . . . plenty to talk about." He squeezed her wrist. "All right?"

"But . . ." She thought of the hard blue chairs in the parlor and the black iron stove where Stephen fixed their meals and the land all around them where Stephen had planted things and was watching them grow. This is Stephen's farm. Nothing here was hers, not even the organ. He had taken care of it, and it was his. He only loaned it out. She was living here like a guest, an orphan, a poor relative.

The Jersey came up across the pasture, moving showily from patch of shade to patch of sun. "They're fine cattle," he said. "Isn't that Jersey a beauty? Markings perfect." He laughed. "We got a cow all our own. That's it. Everything is new and it never belonged to anyone else, or if it did, we don't know them. Everything's new."

It was partly the newness that troubled her, but she could not tell him that. There was nothing here with a past, nothing familiar. There was nothing here of what she had been. And then Mrs. Bagley straightened herself in the wicker chair and reminded herself that there was no need to think about it. She could not live long and she could very well stand the lack of possession, and the lack of, somehow, being, and the newness. Stephen would be very alone when she died. He must have something of his own to take hold of. She leaned back in her chair and sighed.

Stephen got to his feet, his eyes on the casual journey of the cow across the pasture, and said, "I'm going down to the barn. If there's anything that you want . . ." He started across the lawn and she watched him go, not interested in him but in the fact of his

moving. His heavy shoes flattened down the grass as he walked, and it was different from the rest then, dull and curled under. The breeze quickened and curled like a hand around her throat. She turned her head so that it could reach her sun-warm cheeks and closed her eyes.

The afternoon passed quickly as she slept and then the night, and the next day and the next. Saturday she and Stephen had the long jouncing trip into Belfast in the wagon behind the mare. Mrs. Bagley watched the mare's haunches lunge and jolt and wondered how long the road was. Then she waited in the doctor's waiting room and after an hour or so was led into his office. The doctor had stared at her for a moment and then he had said, "Good Lord, I hope you're seeing a doctor?" And then laughed because he was a doctor. She had said yes, because it was the easiest thing to do, and then he had said, "Well, then, you know that your trouble isn't in your eyes."

She had said yes again and they had made friends, the doctor a little nervous, but kind. The glasses came a week or so later, and she wore them to please Stephen, not because they helped her much. When he was in the house she would sit with her book on knitting, peering at it through the double lenses. She smiled through them at him, and all summer watched him grow and change. He seemed to grow heavier as the

bean pods filled out, she thought, straighter and browner and heavier. He laughed a lot now, rather a loud laugh, which scraped curiously on her sensitive ears.

At supper he talked and joked, and if he had been with Ans Higgins, told her everything that Ans had said. And then they went into the parlor and she played the organ no matter if she were worn out, because it made him happier and easier in his mind. Every day it was a little harder to open her eyes in the morning and every day it seemed to grow harder to live with Stephen. Over and over again she would

think of the time when it would be over, not distinctly as death, but as a time when she could be very still, covered over and free. He kept asking her to do things and she did not have the strength, and when she failed, at first he laughed and said, "Now, try," and then he had stopped laughing and frowned. Toward the end of the summer he had stopped seeing anything that she did. Only he did not stop asking.

Autumn came early and for a day in September the house was full of people she had never seen before, people from the canning factory come to pick the beans. She sat in front of the house in her wicker chair, which Stephen had painted blue for her and talked to them when they came down to the house for water. After they had their lunch on the lawn near her chair, one of them, a woman with warm, worried eyes, had come and sat on the grass next to her. She had been silent for a moment and then reached over and taken Mrs. Bagley's hand into hers and said, "I didn't know that Mr. Bagley had a mother. We live down in the village, my husband and I. I'm Mrs. Walker. My husband's teaching at the high school. I'll come up and see you sometime . . . soon." But she had never come.

Steve had been very pleased with the bean crop and when the money had come in, a check from the canning factory, he had jumped to a seat on the kitchen table and beat the top of it hard with his fist. "Money," he said, "enough to take us through the winter, and enough to paint the barn. Money, dammit."

Mrs. Bagley thought of the brick red he was going to paint the barn and she glanced desperately out the window to look at the silver shingles and the brown walls. But the sun was gone, and all she could see was the last faint color of sun at the edge of the sky, running along the horizon like a drop of rosy water on the rim of a sapphire plate. There was her own reflection, too, white in the window glass, thin, with huge dark eyes and narrow shoulder cupped protectingly around her chest. The barn was painted in late September, and she stopped looking at it those afternoons she was wrapped up and carried out to the chair. She gazed down instead into the autumn hollow, but it was like a bad taste in her mouth. She seemed to see it out of the corner of her eye, as if it were a ghost that would disappear when she turned her head.

Autumn passed in a shower of red and gold days and the corn was cut and the stubble plowed under. Stephen tried his hand at canning and he managed to put up shelves of various things. He looked at the rows of shiny quart jars in the small pantry and said, "That's going to last us until next spring," and smiled.



Linda Carroll

"We can stay holed up here all winter and never speak to a soul." She had smiled back at him feebly, too tired to speak. The pain was now a living ache in her chest and behind her eyes, and she was afraid to close them for long. The yellow and black flashed before them and she was gone into a horror of not existing. Only when she was exhausted could she sleep, and then fitfully, waked by the clocks and creakings of the house.

The first snow came the fifth of November, soft, to her a reminder of something she used to know. The light reflected in the window the next morning and was white and very cold. She did not dare close her eyes and she could not bear the staring white and she gathered energy and called, "Stephen, Stephen." He was in her bedroom making the bed, and he came to her after a moment with the pillow against his chest, fluffing it. "What?"

"The shade. The light hurts my eyes." She drew in a long breath. "Pull the shade."

He laughed indulgently and crossed the room. The shade came down with a click and she relaxed. "You should wear your glasses." He brought them to her. "This cold weather isn't being very good for you." He frowned. "But it's warm in here. Shame you can't get out." And he went back into the bedroom.

After the first snow storm, they came fast and hard. The snow piled up against the back of the house until she could not see out of her bedroom window. It was still very dark now in the mornings when Stephen waked her and got her breakfast and went out to the barn to take care of the stock. He came back red and stamping the snow from his hip boots and talking about the barn and the cattle and how well they were doing, and it all merged in her mind with the warm darkness of her bedroom and the white light that knifed in from outdoors when Stephen opened the door. It was like living in a burrow. It was like living in a warm grave. It was like being shut in a cotton stuffed box, warm and close. She was not strong enough now to resent it, only to feel a little afraid. She was surprised as the part of her mind that was always still, beyond pain and dark, saw the fear grow. But I am not afraid, she said to herself, and for a little while it was true.

Then one morning in December as she crossed the narrow border between half-awake and half-asleep, she heard the wind keening around the house, muffled because of the snow piled against the windows, but loud, and she lay still in her bed and hated the snow. Stephen came in shortly to get her up. "Good morning," he said cheerfully.

He carried her into the kitchen and laid her on the couch. There was coffee brewing on the stove and her cereal was boiling furiously, making the doubleboiler bump in an odd rhythm, like someone knocking on the wall. "Breakfast's about ready," said Stephen, and started laying the table. He'd bought new china, heavy and cream white, and they used it now instead of the china they had brought from the house in Haverhill. She watched him through the blur in her eyes as he

moved around the kitchen, still tanned and heavy.

Finally he poured her some coffee and said, "You ready?" and took her to the breakfast table. It was an effort to sit up straight, but she held herself tightly and forced herself to drink from the thick white cup. A minute later she set the cup down so that it crashed into the saucer. "Stephen, please take me back to the couch." Stephen looked up from his eggs and saw her face, white and incredibly thin, tired, looking like the head of death in the old woodcuts. "All right. What's the matter?"

She could not answer, and he got up hurriedly and carried her to the couch. He pulled a cushion into shape behind her head and bent over her anxiously. He repeated, "What's the matter?" She closed her eyes for a moment and could see nothing but dark and was grateful. "Nothing, Stephen. I'm tired." Then she felt a great pain start up her side, thundering in her head like the wind around the house. It had come before but not like this. She waited until it eased, squeezing her eyes shut and tightening her fingers around Stephen's arm. Then she opened her eyes and looked up into Stephen's startled face. "Stephen," she said in a voice as faint as snow blown over snow, "I don't think I am going to last much longer." Then her voice gained strength as she saw the snow white through the window and the dark bulk of her son barring her from the room.

"I'm afraid," she said. Then in great relief, she wailed, "I'm afraid, Stephen. I don't want to die while it's snowing. Oh, please Stephen, not while its snowing." The fear blossomed yellow and black at the back of her eyes and she could not see him for a moment. "I'm afraid, Stephen, let me live until spring. I don't want to die while it's snowing. I don't want to die." She could not cry, she was too worn out to cry, she could only whimper. She lay there and breathed in starts, her eyes strained open, the pain echoing in her head. "I'm afraid."

She had not been afraid, but she was now. She did not know. She did not know anything. Stephen's face was pale and the corners of his mouth were a strained white.

"You are not dying," he said roughly. "Can't talk like that. Stop talking." He knelt beside her and put one heavy arm across her chest. "Foolish. You aren't dying." He smiled, but it was not a smile, only lips pressed wide across his teeth. "Don't talk."

She tried to curl up around the pain and his arm held her flat. She lay there, breathing irregularly with her eyes open, staring at the white ceiling. She could not feel anything, not even his arm as it tightened convulsively. She could not see. There was a blurred series of black and yellow circles, like the clenching of a tremendous fist inside her head. Stephen was shouting at her. She could hear him shout but she could not hear what he was saying. Blindly she tried to turn toward his voice, but the only recognizable sound was the whining of the snow-clogged wind around the roof and the slashing of snow against the windows, loud

and threatening. She was suddenly cold. She did not have the energy to speak, to move; she could only listen to the roar of the wind and Stephen's voice mingling and dying down. She lay still and her transparent eyelids closed down over the pale blue eyes.

Stephen tightened his arm around her waist until he could feel the pitiful sharpness of her hip bone digging into his arm. "You are not dying," he said coldly and angrily, his voice rising to a shout. "You can't die." He stood up and made his hands into fists and shouted down at her. "This is my house. You can't die." And he was shouting it over and over again, "You can't die..."

He glared down at her, angry, terrified, seeing the end of all he had made, finally unable to speak. He saw the closed eyes and the white hands, small bones under loose skin like white cotton, and knew that she was dead. He began to whimper, mother-mother-mother, rapidly, and it was a question. He knelt again and laid his head against her side and said mother, I'm sorry mother. Mother, over and over again. One hand closed over hers and he laid his forehead against the material of her wrapper. He burrowed into it saying mother mother mother, to himself like a child.

It was late morning when he woke and the storm had blown itself out. It was deathly quiet, and he lay for a moment, not moving, hearing the whisper of the fire in the stove as it fell in upon itself. Then he got up and stretched. The cramped muscles in his shoulder cracked. There was an odd numbness around his mouth and behind his ears and he shook his head several times to get rid of it. He looked down, once, at his mother, and saw the white peace on her face and was irritated, because he remembered vaguely that she was afraid. He reached down as if to push her face to the wall, and stopped with his hands poised

above the pillow. He did not want to touch her. He jerked the pillow from beneath her and put it over her face, then pulled the thin quilt up over her. And he could not see her and turned away. She would have to be buried, he thought, right away. He looked back at the long slim hump under the quilt and knew that it was his mother and felt nothing but a vague anger. She would have to be buried.

It would be a long job. She had died and now he had to bury her and it would take a long time and a lot of people would have to come up to the farm on Goosepecker Ridge and he would see them, and they would

see him, and they would know that he had lost his mother, and he would know too, and it would be a thing that they would know against him. He would have to get a lot in the cemetery snowed in now between its high iron fences. The numbness in his head spread and he rubbed his ears, not feeling the warmth of his own hands or the sound of the wind in his closed ears. He did not feel like himself.

He heard the fire splutter softly and knew that it was almost out. He got the kerosene can and watched himself pour kerosene through the round hole in the stove top and saw the flame jump up, yellow and angry. He clanged the lid down over it and drew back. Alive

the fire was, and angry, and without feeling anything he began pouring kerosene over the floor and the run and curtains. He soaked the furniture, and the couch. Then he calmly went and got the box of kitchen matches off the stove shelf and lit one and threw it at the curtains. The fire exploded out at him, and he went to the door and pulled his leather jacket from the hook, then stood for a moment watched the fire run across the floor toward him. He opened the door and waded through the snow across the lawn and to the pasture fence, then pulled himself up onto it.



Beverly Schoonover

He looked back at the track that he had made, straight and certain, a furrow plowed through eighteen inches of snow. Then he looked at the house. The windows were bright in the half light, as if there were a party going on inside, and he nodded to himself. That would save the burying.

He rested his chin against his chest closed his eyes and tasted salt and knew that he was crying. The numbness inside his head gradually evaporated and he wiped his face with an icy hand and raised his head. The flames had eaten through the roof quietly, almost smothered by melting snow, but now it burned bright yellow through the black beams of the roof. One fell and he felt the crash against his ear.

Sitting there he watched his house burn. It is a

waste and a shame. He knew he could live in the barn by himself until spring, though, and in the spring Ans and he would build a house on the foundation of the old. He stopped thinking and watched the fire as it gradually burned itself out, doused, finally, by melted snow. And when there was nothing left but charred timber he went into the barn and closed the door behind him.

His mind was clear and clean as it had never been before. He was sure of the next thing to do. He would go down to Ans' for the night. He thought idly of spring as he got the harness, then felt the cold and quickly hitched the mare to the wagon. He knew he would be welcome. Ans had told him to come down anytime.

NEW HOME

(Continued from page 10)

the street, and she must have been there a long time, but I hadn't noticed. I don't guess she saw me because she didn't wave or anything. She just stood there. Then I remembered how she had been crying for Geezer, Mama Dog, and Shiner last night. I wondered what she was thinking now.

I decided not to go to Charley's till after supper, and when I came across the yard, Cack looked at me and said, "He's ugly. He's so ugly."

"Who?" I asked, and looked across the street where she was still staring. Geezer was standing on his porch watching and there was a bunch of people still around Shiner. Maybe at last she was over the stuff about Geezer; he sure looked ugly to me. But she didn't answer, so I went on in.

At supper that night, it seemed like I couldn't talk about anything but Shiner and all that. After a while, Mom said, "Bill, let's don't talk about it anymore."

That kinda surprised me. Mom nodded toward Cack, and I saw Dad was watching her, so I started

looking at her, too. She hadn't eaten any of her food. She was just sitting there putting peas in her mashed potatoes and covering each one up. She looked like she was about to cry, and she kept looking down at her plate. Then Dad took a deep breath and started talking in his cheer-up voice.

"Well, Cackie, you'll never guess what Mommie and I have decided to do."

She kinda jumped and looked at him.

"What?" she asked.

"Well, Mom and I thought we might get a dog for you and Bill."

He smiled, and I did, too.

Then Cack had jumped up and tears were coming down her face, and she yelled, "No! No! I don't want you to. I don't want you to. They are ugly—and—mean—and—and ugly."

After that she ran out of the kitchen. Mom got up and went after her.

LANDSCAPE OF THE HEART

(Continued from Page 14)

There is much humor—and very delightful and genuine humor—in the story. In spite of their conditions—or perhaps because of them—many of the patients have a flair for wit. Willa Dawes, the ex-nun, ex-lady wrestler, with her wholesomeness and her sincerity, is the notable example. Dr. Munson could never have returned to sanity without his ability to laugh. Some of the patients necessarily become the butts of the jokes of the others: Nan Stoner, constantly constipated, Miss Marybelle, with her father and her flowers, and Peter Newlin, the effeminate poet, with his “right word.” But the laughter is seldom cruel. Bryant Hill itself, with its circular staircase, 24-carat-gold faucets, and numberless rooms—an old man’s jinxed dream—seems at times one big joke.

The characters are drawn with careful selection of detail. There is one particular detail that comes to be associated with each person; Nan Stoner and Ex-Lax; Mr. Boring and his puns on his own name; and Peter Newlin and his manila folder. It is interesting that the reader learns least about the background of Dr. Evans, the psychiatrist, who has the primary influence upon Judith’s recovery, and learns most about those patients who were Judith’s closest friends: Willa Dawes, Carl Munson, and Amy Shen. Dr. Evans remains something of a “mystery man,” and yet he is just as real, just as alive for the reader as are any of

the other characters.

The novel is narrated largely from Judith’s point of view, and because of that, there is a dreamy, unreal quality about parts of it. Under the unreality, however, there is always the assurance that reality is there, to be sought and found, no matter what the cost. Mrs. Rogers handles the narration so skillfully that even in the passage that relates the confused working of Judith’s mind during her relapse, the reader is able to follow the rapid jumps from one line of thought to another.

Landscape of the Heart is moving and believable. Its account of Judith’s struggle to break from the easy refuge of madness and return to sanity makes gripping, interesting reading. More than its readability, however, the story has something to say to any reader—the normal, the disturbed, and the crusaders for more competent handling of the mentally ill. The jist of what it has to say is in these lines:

“ . . . she wanted to add, half reverently, half accusingly, ‘You’re the one who has made me believe in God.’

‘God is love,’ he said, as if plucking the thought out of her mind, ‘The love that moves the sun and the other stars. The love that moves us all.’ ”

—Virginia Morrison

THE PRISONER

(Continued from page 11)

in the corner. Finally the attendant came.

‘You go on out,’ she said to Johnny. ‘I’ll take your wife inside. And don’t worry.’

Johnny tried to kiss her goodbye, but she twisted her head about and cried out again, ‘Leave me alone!’ so that all he could do was to go to the stairs, turn hesitantly at the top to look back, and then go down. He glanced at the window on the landing, and saw that the clouds completely overcast the sky now. The steel bars at the window made a sort of graph to show the motion of the darker clouds. At the foot of the stairs the receptionist opened the door to let him out.

The attendant, propping the ward door open with her foot, didn’t touch her, but just said, ‘Let’s go in

now, Mrs. Rand.’

She was calm now that he had gone; she heard the outer door shut behind him at the foot of the stairs. She made a desperate half-lunge toward the cool air that came up the stairs. The attendant said, ‘Mrs. Rand?’ She stopped. There were two attendants now. They took her to a ‘quiet’ room inside the ward, and they locked the door so that she could not get out. She went immediately to the window of the room.

The sky was outside. She could see it clearly. She said, very softly, as though she really wanted only to hear it, without telling anyone else: ‘In a way you’re right, Johnny. It’s still there, the sky is—and I know it stretches far out of sight even beyond the window and the bars. It’s still there, out of sight.’

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